(c) whether any realistic assessment been made of the practicability of the new timings from the point of view of punctuality and staff convenience and if so, what are the result thereof; and

(d) whether Government propose to consider to revert back to the 6 day week?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI BIREN SINGH ENGTI): (a) No serious complaint from, or any specific instance of inconvenience to, the general public has been brought to the notice of this Ministry.

(b) The increase in working hours by 30 minutes per day for the office staff of the Central Government with effect from 17-11-86 was not done to make up the deficiency arising out of granting one extra weekly holiday. The increase was effected after taking a decision in the light of 4th Pay Commission's Recommendations that the working hours of office staff in Central Government may be suitably increased.

(c) Before increase of working hours, the Government of India Administrative Offices were working for seven hours per day (including half an hour for lunch) within the limits prescribed for commencement and closure of offices, namely, 9.00 A.M. and 6.00 P.M. Even after increase in daily working hours by 30 minutes office timings have been adjusted within these limits.

(d) There is no such proposal at the moment.

Export and uprootment of rare herbs from Himalayas

3127. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that many medicinal rare herbs found in the Himalayas are uprooted and exported;

(b) if so, whether Government have drawn up any plan to ensure that these herbs do not become extinct; and

(c) if not, the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI): (a) There are some reports regarding exploitation of rare herbs found in Himalayas.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

2128. [*Transferred to the 3rd December*, 1986.]

Complaints of over and excessive charging by Telecommunications Department

3129. DR. MOHD. HASHIM KIDWAI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) what was the number of complaints against over or excessive billing by the Telecommunications Department received by Government during the first half of 1986 and what are the figures for the corresponding period in 1985; and

(b) what are the details of remedial action taken by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SANTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) The number of complaints against over and excessive billing by the Telecommunications Department received by Government during the first half of 1986 is 42,702 and that for the corresponding period in 1985 is 41,446.

(b) The following steps are taken to reduce the incidence of over billing:

(1) To avoid clearical errors, instructions have already been issued to all the units to ensure proper care in billing and to rectify the mistakes if any, immediately and issue a revised bill to the subscribed wherever necessary. Moreover to eliminate mistakes in computation, the work of telephone billing and accounting has been computerised in the Metro districts of Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi and Madras.

(2) As far as technical faults are concerned the following steps have been taken:

(i) Introduction of positive battery metering in cross-bar exchanges.

(ii) Provision of automatic switch over of day and night traffic.

(iii) Reduction of forced release period on called subscriber-held conditions from 1 to 2 minutes to 10 to 20 seconds in case of subscriber's dialled trunk calls.

(iv) Introduction of 500 milli-seconds, delay in trunk automatic exchanges for recognition of called subscriber answer conditions; and

(v) Routine testing of subscriber meter.

3. To safeguard the interest of subscribers and to prevent mischievous elements from tempering with the meter or line the following additional measures have been taken;

(1) Sealing of meters.

(2 Locking of meter rooms.

(3) Restriction of entry into MDF. Room (Main Distribution Frame Room).

(4) Rasing of distribution points.

(5) Locking of distribution points.

Suicides committed in Metropolitan Cities

3130. DR. MOHD. HASHIM KIDWAI: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of suicides committed in metropolitan cities of the country from January, 1985 till September, 1986; and

(b) the details of steps proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) A statement is enclosed. (See below).

(b) Necessary preventive steps are taken to check the crime where it comes to notice before its committal.

Statement

Number of suicides committed in the Metropolitan cities of the Country from January, 85 till Sept. 86

Metropolitan Cities	January, 85 to Decem, ber, 1985	January, 86 to Septem- ber, 1986
Ahmedabad . .	171	162
Bangalore . .	411	252
Bombay . .	423	160
Calcutta . .	128	85*
Delhi . . .	410	74
Hyderabad . .	184	..
Jaipur . . .	45	..
Kanpur . .	255	20
Lucknow . .	72	..
Madras . .	718	60
Nagpur . .	194	9
Pune . . .	165	137
TOTAL . . .	3176	1641

NOTE: (1) Figures may be treated as provisional.

(2) Dash(—) indicates the Nil Information.

(3) *Upto August, 1986.

Coverage of U. P. Districts by the T. V. network

3131. DR. MOHD. HASHIM KIDWAI: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of districts in U. P. which are not covered by the T. V. network till September, 1986;

(b) by when these districts are likely to be covered by the T. V. network; and

(c) what are the details of T. V. facilities proposed to be transacted to these districts during the Seventh Five Year Plan period?